

**Secret**

25X1



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

## *Special Report*

*Guyana's People's Progressive Party:  
Problems and Prospects*

MORI/CDF 97295 Pages 2-9

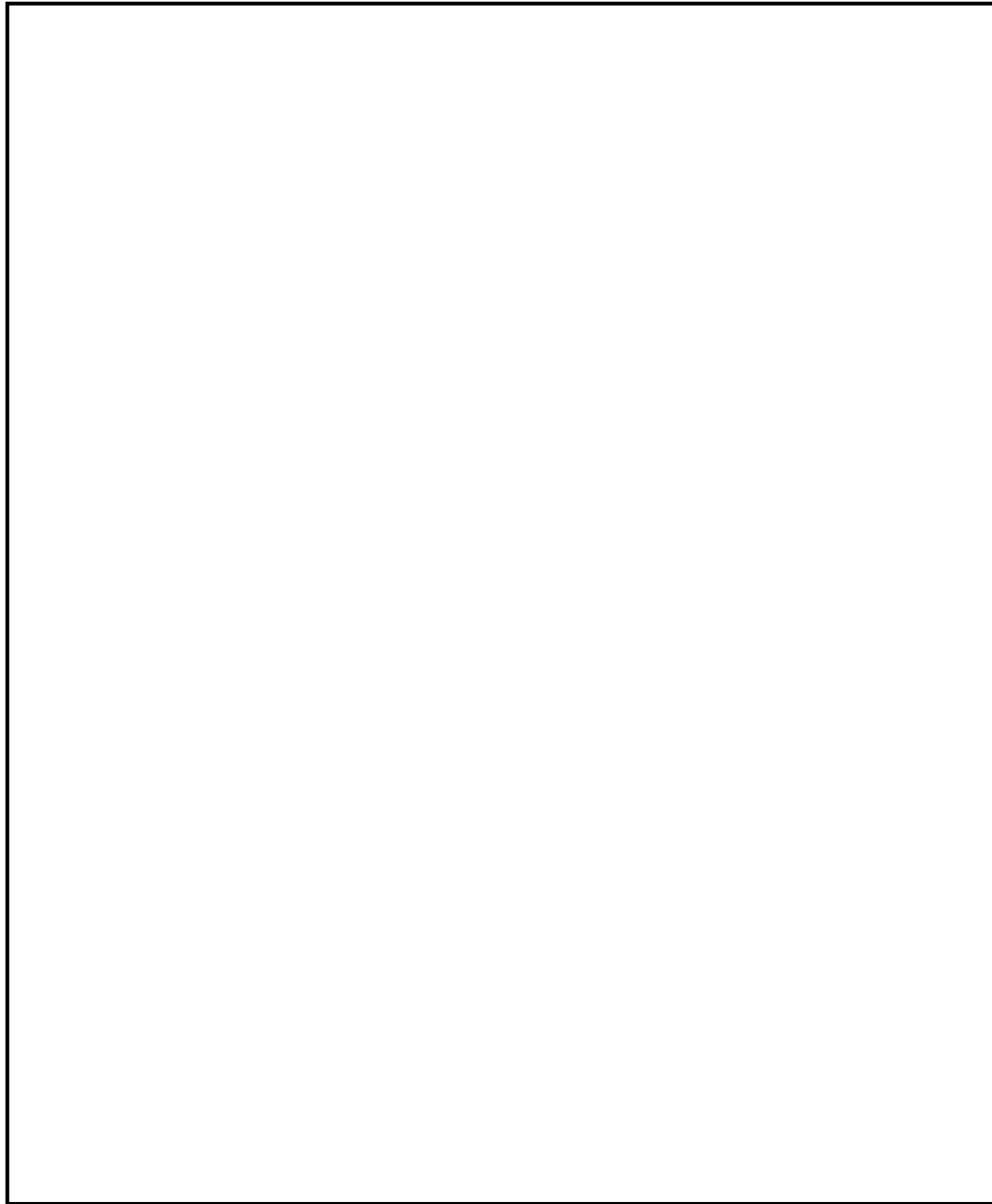
**Secret**

No 38

10 February 1967  
No. 0276/67B

**Secret**

25X1



**Secret**

SECRET

25X1

## GUYANA'S PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Guyana's pro-Communist People's Progressive Party (PPP) is the largest and best organized political grouping in the country. Its leader, Cheddi Jagan, headed the government from the time the British granted universal adult suffrage to their former colony in 1953 until his defeat in December 1964, except for short periods when the British suspended the constitution. Although the party is experiencing some internal problems, the East Indian vote is still solidly behind it. If the elections scheduled to take place before March 1969 are honest, the PPP stands an excellent chance of being returned to office. Until then, it seems likely to concentrate on propaganda and on efforts to disrupt the economy, to divide the parties in the governing coalition and to avoid violence that would provoke a government crackdown.

### Importance and Orientation

The party is composed primarily of East Indians, who make up almost 50 percent of the population and who follow Jagan because he is a member of their race. They are convinced that he is the only political leader who has their interests at heart and that he will protect them from the more aggressive Negro population. Although Jagan, his wife Janet, and some of his other top lieutenants are Communists and Marxists who see to it that the PPP follows an extreme leftist line, the bulk of the membership is unconcerned with ideological questions. In fact, many of the PPP's wealthier East Indian members would be happier if Jagan were more favorably disposed toward capitalism; even

the poorer ones are petty capitalists at heart. Many members are fairly religious Hindus and Moslems who would prefer that Jagan not be quite so identified with "atheistic Communism."

Jagan was defeated in 1964 because the British changed the electoral system to require that a party or coalition could win control of the government only if it had a majority of the votes. The PPP received a plurality, as usual, but was unable to form a coalition with another party. The Negro-dominated People's National Congress (PNC), led by Forbes Burnham, and the small conservative United Force (UF) then joined forces to obtain the needed majority. Burnham became prime

SECRET



CHEDDI JAGAN



JANET JAGAN

## LEADERSHIP OF GUYANA'S PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PPP)

### Members of General Council (PPP)

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

LEADER: CHEDDI JAGAN  
DEPUTY LEADER: ASHTON CHASE  
CHAIRMAN: CEDRIC VERNON NUNES  
FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN: H. J. M. HUBBARD  
SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN: J. RUDOLPH LUCK  
GENERAL SECRETARY: JANET JAGAN  
ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY: E. M. G. WILSON  
TREASURER: BOYSIE RAMKARRAN

#### MEMBERS:

RANJI CHANDISINGH  
DEREK JAGAN  
MOONEER KHAN  
JAIRAM KARRAN  
\*BALCHAND PERSAUD  
\*FENTON RAMSAHOYE

YACOOB ALLY  
ZAMAN ALI  
MACCIE HAMID  
HARRY LALL  
REEPU DAMAN PERSAUD  
SUBHAN ALI RAMJOHN  
VINCENT TEEKAH

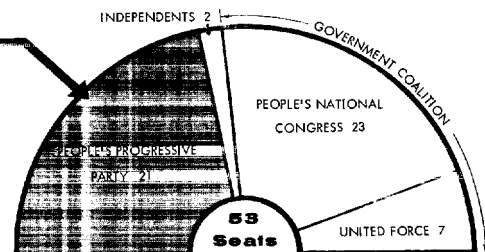
(Balchand Persaud and Fenton Ramsahoye, although voting members of the GENERAL COUNCIL, are nonvoting members of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

Executive Committee

### Members of Legislative Assembly (PPP)

CHEDDI JAGAN  
BRINDLEY BENN  
BOYSIE RAMKARRAN  
EUGENE STOBY  
E. M. G. WILSON  
RANJI CHANDISINGH  
LLOYD LINDE  
C. R. JACOB  
JOCELYN HUBBARD  
DEREK JAGAN  
MOONEER KHAN  
FENTON RAMSAHOYE  
REEPU DAMAN PERSAUD  
CEDRIC VERNON NUNES  
YACOOB ALLY  
J. RUDOLPH LUCK  
MACCIE HAMID  
SUBHAN ALI RAMJOHN  
ASHTON CHASE  
HARRY LALL  
MOHENDERNATH POONAI  
(POSSIBLY A MODERATE)

#### Party Strength In Legislative Assembly



Members of Moderate Group  
Printed in Red

SECRET  
65642 2-67 CIA

25X1

SECRET

25X1

minister and Jagan went into opposition for the first time.

Although it can be statistically demonstrated that Burnham could win the next election, Jagan is still in the running. East Indians, with a much higher birth rate than Negroes, will have very close to a majority of the votes by 1969. In addition, almost the entire East Indian vote will go to the PPP, whereas the Negroes are less clannish and all will not necessarily support Burnham. Moreover, friction within the coalition might force the PNC and UF to campaign against each other, and disappointment with the government's inability to live up to all its ambitious 1964 campaign promises may throw some former PNC and UF votes toward the opposition.

Jagan and the  
"Moderate-Extremist" Split

Although in a fairly good position vis-a-vis the PNC, the PPP has been troubled by a "moderate-extremist" split which has become serious since Jagan left office. This split, however, is less concerned with ideology than with tactics and personalities. The moderates, although they opposed violent opposition in the early days of the PNC-UF government, do not necessarily harbor any overly kindly feelings toward the free world. They are moderate mainly in the sense that they resent Jagan's dominance, feel a too rabid advocacy of extreme left-

ism is unnecessary and unwise, and oppose any action that would prompt Burnham to proscribe the party or violence that might force him to turn to the United States for military support. The extremists, on the other hand, are less fearful of the Burnham government.

Jagan would like to do away with the moderate group because he is more in sympathy with the extremists ideological positions. Practically, he would like to reduce the influence of the moderates because he sees them as the main danger to his leadership. Although his East Indian followers would probably never desert him for Burnham or the PNC, some might in time be induced to follow another East Indian PPP leader with less inclinations toward Communism.

In addition to his own ideological convictions, therefore, Jagan views the indoctrination of party organizers and members in Marxist-Leninist principles as of primary importance. He wants to add ideological conviction to race as grounds for joining the PPP and following his leadership.

In pursuit of this goal Jagan has sent the PPP's brightest young people to Communist countries for schooling and is strengthening the party's local indoctrination program. Party organizers

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

are, therefore, being sent to classes at the PPP's ideological institute, Acabre College, and these organizers together with high-ranking party members have begun stumping the countryside giving Marxist instruction to East Indian villagers. These efforts are likely to be frustrated by the East Indian's disinterest in ideology, but the attempt is significant in that it shows the direction of Jagan's thinking and his concern for his position.

Because of moderate-extremist differences on policy and Jagan's vacillation between them, the PPP lost ground in the early months of the Burnham regime. Since then, instead of blaming his own wavering leadership, Jagan has begun attempting to centralize party decision-making even more completely in his own hands and to make sure that the top party leadership is composed of men whose advice "he can trust."

Jagan, however, cannot move against the moderates without careful preparation. Many of them are competent organizers and important men in the East Indian community and until replacements are found the party needs them. Furthermore, he does not want to antagonize unaligned party members by forcing them to take sides in the controversy. His first effort, in November 1966, was an attempt to introduce a greater degree of "democratic centralism" into the PPP. To do this, he proposed that a committee be established to select from the entire party potential members for the general

council and that those named be elected en bloc at the annual congress. Since the selection committee would obviously have been controlled by Jagan, the moderates--who had gained a majority on the council under the existing system of individual candidates--vigorously opposed the change and the proposal never came to an official vote. Jagan has now backed off and is attempting to accomplish his goal by piecemeal replacement. His control of the party is such that he can usually get his way and his present difficulties with the moderates are more a nuisance than a serious problem.

#### Difficulties With Party Groups

Jagan is attempting to strengthen the party's labor program and bring the PPP's unions and front organizations more firmly under his personal control. Although the East Indians vote for Jagan and support him in political matters, many of them find that in economic affairs they receive substantial benefits by belonging to non-PPP unions. In order to keep on the good side of the PPP, however, many of them also pay dues to its union.

For example, although Jagan began his career as the champion of the oppressed East Indian sugar workers, the most important of their two unions--the 21,000-man Manpower Citizens Association (MPCA)--is anti-PPP. Because of the dual registration this membership figure is inflated. Actually the union has only some 13,000 hard-core supporters, but

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

even this figure is more than four times the hard-core membership of the PPP's Guyana Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU). Despite the PPP's use of strikes and intimidation to increase its membership, the MPCA demonstrates time after time that it has a majority of the organized sugar workers and therefore remains the only union authorized to speak for the workers.

MPCA's strength stems from its ability to obtain satisfactory wage agreements. Lately, however, management has become reluctant to grant additional salary increases. If this continues, the PPP may have some success in convincing the workers that the MPCA's anti-Jagan leadership has sold out to the Burnham government. If Jagan were to gain control of the unionized sugar workers he would have a powerful tool with which to press the government. Sugar accounts for about a third of Guyana's export earnings, and prolonged strikes in the industry could seriously damage the economy.

Jagan is convinced that the GAWU and other unsuccessful PPP unions would make greater strides under new leadership--namely his. He is particularly dissatisfied with the performance of Harry Lall, GAWU's long-time president. In October 1966 Jagan arranged to have the PPP's general council vote to dismiss Lall. GAWU held out until December when it finally approved amendments to its constitution that will permit Jagan to assume leadership. Now, however, it is considering

a merger with the National Association of Clerical, Commercial, and Industrial Employees under the PPP's deputy party leader, Ashton Chase. Chase and Lall--both moderates--have informed the PPP that they would not accept party control of their merged union and so Jagan's control is not yet assured. Jagan may eventually win out by judicious use of party funds, but his struggles with the unions are indicative of party weakness--a weakness which probably would never have become apparent if Jagan had not been forced into the opposition.

Jagan has also become concerned with his lack of control over the party's youth and women's groups. In 1965 he installed new--and presumably more tractable--leaders in the party's Progressive Youth Organization (PYO) and Women's Progressive Organization (WPO).

Although he has been reasonably successful in controlling the WPO, the PYO is getting out of hand again. It has, for example, been sending delegates to international Communist meetings without informing the party that an invitation had even been received.

Both groups are financial drains on the party and Jagan believes he could cut expenses as well as exercise greater control if they were made an integral part of the PPP. The general council has voted to disband them both, and it looks as if Jagan will have less difficulty with the PYO and WPO than he had with the more established and independent-minded unions.

SECRET

SECRET

25X1

Jagan's drive to exercise greater control over party activities has led him to take a second look at the program of sending students abroad. About 100 of them are now in Communist countries on long-term scholarships, and many of them have stayed long enough to become disillusioned with both Communism and the PPP. To correct this situation the party has decided to send primarily its hard-core organizers and to grant very few more long-term scholarships.

Janet Jagan, Cheddi's American-born wife, is a great help to her husband in administrative matters. The extent of her influence in ideological and policy affairs is open to question, but she can be expected to play an important role in formulating Jagan's strategy and tactics for taking greater control over the party.

#### International Ties

Despite its troubles at home, the PPP still has hopes of becoming an important force abroad. It maintains close contact with foreign Communist and other leftist organizations and receives financial assistance from the Soviet Union. Communist money for the PPP is usually channeled either directly via courier through the Communist Party of Great Britain or indirectly through GIMPEX, the PPP's trading arm. Both the Soviet Union and Cuba have given Jagan political advice from time to time and Guyanese have been sent to Cuba for guerrilla training. The PPP is pro-Moscow, but party members

have traveled to Communist China and in mid-1965 the Chinese offered the PPP "training courses." Although foreign Communist financial support has fallen off since Jagan's electoral defeat it would probably pick up if the party's election prospects were to improve substantially.

In support of less affluent leftist parties in the Caribbean, the PPP has recently provided modest sums to Surinam's National Revolutionary Party and Trinidad and Tobago's Workers and Farmers Party (WFP), and it is advising a leftist group recently formed within the WFP. The PPP, however, is not a dynamic influence outside Guyana and its support of Caribbean leftist organizations probably does no more than establish good will for the party. As long as Jagan is out of office, the PPP's international importance is not likely to grow.

#### Tactics in Opposition

Partly because of its emphasis upon internal reorganization and partly because of fear of severe government reprisals, the PPP is not instigating major disturbances. However, its communications media pour out a steady stream of antigovernment propaganda. Burnham is being characterized as a puppet of the United States, the economy is said to be deteriorating at a rapid rate, and the country is described as being "sold to the imperialists." The government's attempts to improve the rice industry, in which the majority of East Indians are employed, are scorned, and the measures taken

SECRET



SECRET

25X1

are said to work against the East Indians. Racial themes are played repeatedly in line with the party's policy of keeping the East Indian in constant fear of Burnham and the Negroes. The prime minister is sensitive to Jagan's propaganda and has at times been goaded into ill-advised actions in order to avoid or answer the PPP's attacks.

The PPP has always had a terrorist arm, and early this year it was considering various sites where clandestine instruction in sabotage could be given. It hoped to have some 200 young people selected for training in the use of explosives by the end of January. Hand-picked members of the PPP and PYO are still being sent abroad for "special training"--

Jagan, however, is reluctant to turn to violence because he believes that the prime minister has control over the security forces and that they could put down any, except the most serious and widespread, disturbances. Furthermore, he realizes that Burnham would not hesitate to use the powers given the government by the recently adopted National Security Act to place Jagan or his most valuable lieutenants under preventive detention. Given the docile nature of the East Indians, plus their fear of the Negroes, it is likely that the PPP's projected arms and sabotage training is being instituted to maintain a capability to engage in violence if this becomes necessary and is not indicative of a shift in basic strategy heralding a campaign of armed insurrection.

25X1

25X1

\* \* \*

SECRET

**Secret**

**Secret**

**Page Denied**

Next 3 Page(s) In Document Denied

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1